GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:24
ANSWERED ON:20.11.2002
INDO-U.S. TIES
IQBAL AHMED SARADGI;SUSHIL KUMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and the U.S. have started a new regional dialogue on a wide range of issues;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the purpose thereof;

(c) whether during a meeting on the side-lines of UN General Assembly, the US President reaffirmed his personal commitment to the Prime Minister to begin a long term strategic relationship with India and expressed concern over terrorists` strikes and killings in Jammu and Kashmir; and

(d) if so, the broad features of the strategic relationship and the steps taken and being taken for development of such relationship?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI YASHWANT SINHA)

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The first India - U.S. Regional Dialogue was held during the visit of U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Christina Rocca to Delhi on 24-25 September 2002. The Dialogue provides an institutional forum for regular consultations between India and the United States on developments in India`s extended neighbourhood and represents another step in strengthening the strategic framework of India-U.S. relations.

(c) Yes, Sir. During their meeting in New York on 12 September 2002, the Prime Minister and the President reaffirmed their commitment to continue the process of qualitatively transforming India-U.S. relations and emphasised, in this context, the deepening of the bilateral dialogue and the strengthening of the new strategic framework of relations. President Bush also conveyed that the United States would continue to press President Musharraf to fulfil his commitments on ending cross-border terrorism in India.

(d) The two sides believe that closer partnership between India and the United States is important for pursuing their many common strategic interests in Asia and beyond. To this end, they have agreed to enhance political and strategic consultations; deepen cooperation in defence, security and in combating international terrorism; further develop economic relations; and, explore possibilities of expanding cooperation in space, diverse forms of energy, high-technology commerce and science. Since September, the two sides have accelerated their bilateral engagement and taken concrete steps towards strengthening the strategic framework of India-U.S. relations.